



From : Adam Watson
Sent : 11 December 2012
To : Joe Dorward
Subject : NTS use of rack-felling by monstrous timber machines

Are you likely to be coming up this winter, Joe?

I'd like to get Sandy Walker over from Grantown, as he is by far the most experienced and critical soil scientist that I know. He is strongly against using rack felling in plantations as well as old woods, because I found that the machines destroyed the podzol soil type, which is the foundation stone of the boreal forest ecosystem, and when I showed this to Sandy he confirmed that I was right.

Peter Holden assured Sandy last year that they would not use the machines in the Old Caledonian Forest relics. However, NTS are hoping and expecting that the OCF will expand by natural regeneration into the plantations, so the podzol destruction in the plantations results in destruction of the heath-dominated pinewood vegetation. You would still get pines, but growing on an anthropogenic anomalous soil type and above a vegetation of grass, bracken and other species alien to the pinewood ecosystem. Holden appears not to have warned Frew on this.

Also, I have found that NTS at Black Brig breached the conditions of the Eastern Cairngorms SSSI and caused damaging operations that should have had prior consent from SNH. At Black Brig and Brig of Ey,

I have found that NTS breached 10 and 8 conditions respectively of the UK Forestry Standard 2011, and so should have had their UKS certification removed.

In addition, as you know, at Brig of Ey there was serious silt-laden yellowish runoff on to the public road and very close to the Ey Burn, and in heavy rain I would expect this to reach the burn, hence triggering a complaint to SEPA.

The burning of a large brash pile in October this year opposite Mealdarroch Cottage may have breached the conditions for protection of buffer zones, in this case a 20-m width away from the water (FC conditions on buffer zones), but we would need to look at the site again from Mealdarroch to be sure. In October I was unaware of regulations on buffer zones.

Then there is all the tosh you were told about "conservation thinning", when the machine use is against conservation and does not involve proper silvicultural thinning. At Black Brig, the three-foot deep sudden vertical hole with a quicksand at the foot of it is hardly good management for safe access to the public! Likewise, the impenetrable masses of brash, cut logs and ruts at both woods, unacceptable for scenery, landscape, walking and skiing.

I now know that the contractor for the NTS in north-east Scotland is DWP Harvesting Ltd, a company started by Andrew Nicol the laird of Ballogie. DWP machines have caused irreparable and irreversible damage to many woods in Deeside this year, including at NTS Crathes Castle.

Adam